Amendments to the Claims:

The following claims will replace all prior versions of the claims in this application (in the unlikely event that no claims follow herein, the previously pending claims will remain):

1.-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound having phosphate binding capacity ~~and being in a form suitable for oral administration as a medicament~~, said compound being free from aluminum and containing iron(III) and at least one additional metal M where M is selected from the group comprising magnesium, calcium, lanthanum and cerium, said compound having a phosphate binding capacity of at least 30% by weight of the total weight of phosphate present as measured by any of the following methods (1) or (2), over a pH range of 3 to 7;

(1) adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 40 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced;

(2) adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 20 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced.

16. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the ratio M:Fe for the ~~precipitated~~ compound is at least 1.1:1.

17. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the ratio M:Fe for the ~~precipitated~~ compound is at least 1.3:1.

18. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the ratio M:Fe for the ~~precipitated~~ compound is at least 1.7:1.

19. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the ratio M:Fe for the ~~precipitated~~ compound is up to 5:1.

20. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the ratio M:Fe for the ~~precipitated~~ compound is up to 2.6:1.

21. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the ratio M:Fe for the ~~precipitated~~ compound is up to 2.4:1.

22. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the additional metal comprises calcium.

23. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the additional metal comprises magnesium.

24. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the compound contains hydroxyl and/or carbonate ions.

25. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the compound additionally contains at least one of sulphate, chloride and oxide.

26. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15, in which ~~comprising~~ the compound is obtained as precipitate from a solution of a mixture of metallic salts.

27. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 26 ~~15~~, in which the compound is obtained as the unaged precipitate from said solution of mixed metal salts.

28. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 26 ~~15~~, in which the compound is obtained as the washed and unaged precipitate from said solution of mixed metal salts.

29. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which said compound has ~~having~~ a hydrotalcite type structure.

30. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which said compound has a phosphate binding capacity of at least 30% by weight of the total weight of phosphate present as measured by method (1) or by method (2) over a pH range of 2 to 8.

31. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound having phosphate binding capacity and useful as a medicament, said compound being free from aluminum and containing iron(III) and at least one additional metal M, where M is selected from the group comprising magnesium, calcium, lanthanum and cerium, such that the ratio M:Fe is up to 2.6:1, said compound having a phosphate binding capacity of at least 30% by weight of the total weight of phosphate present as measured by any of the following methods (1) or (2), over a pH range of 3 to 7;

(1) adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 40 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating

at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced;

(2) adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 20 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced.

32. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 31 in which the ratio of M:Fe for the ~~precipitated~~ compound is at least 1.3:1.

33. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 31 in which the compound has ~~having~~ a hydrotalcite type structure.

34. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound having phosphate binding capacity and useful as a medicament, in which ~~comprising~~ the compound is obtained as an unaged precipitate from a solution of a mixture of metallic salts, free from aluminum and containing iron(III) and at least one additional metal M, where M is selected from the group comprising magnesium, calcium, lanthanum and cerium, said compound having a phosphate binding capacity of at least 30% by weight of the total weight of phosphate present as measured by any of the following methods (1) or (2), over a pH range of 3 to 7;

(1) adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 40 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced;

(2) adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 20 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating

at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced.

35. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 34, in which ~~comprising~~ the compound is obtained as the washed and unaged precipitate from said solution.

36. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 34 in which the compound has ~~having~~ a hydrotalcite type structure.

37. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound having phosphate binding capacity and useful as a medicament, said compound being free from aluminum and containing iron(III) and at least one additional metal M where M is selected from the group comprising magnesium, calcium, lanthanum and cerium, said compound having a phosphate binding capacity of at least 30% by weight of the total weight of phosphate present as measured by the following method, over a pH range of 2 to 8;

adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 40 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced;

38. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 37 ~~15~~ in which the compound further contains carbonate and/or hydroxyl ions, and said compound being the unaged precipitate from a solution of a mixture of metallic salts.

39. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 38 in which said compound has a phosphate binding capacity of at

least 30% by weight of the total weight of phosphate present as measured by method (1) over a pH range of 2 to 8.

40. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound having phosphate binding capacity and useful as a medicament, said compound being free from aluminum and containing iron(III) and calcium, said compound having a phosphate binding capacity of at least 30% by weight of the total weight of phosphate present as measured by any of the following methods (1) or (2), over a pH range of 3 to 7;

(1) adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 40 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced;

(2) adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 20 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced.

41. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the compound contains ~~containing~~ iron(III) and magnesium such that the ratio Mg:Fe is less than 2.9:1.

42. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition ~~compound~~ as claimed in Claim 15 in which the compounds contains ~~containing~~ iron(III) and magnesium such that the ratio Mg:Fe is greater than 3.1:1.

43. (Currently amended) A method for treating hyperphosphataemia, in an animal in need
thereof, which comprises administering to said animal, a therapeutically effective amount of a ~~solid~~, phosphate-binding, mixed metal compound which is free of

aluminum and contains iron (III) and an additional metal selected from the group comprising magnesium, calcium, lanthanum and cerium.

44. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in Claim 43 in which said compound has a phosphate binding capacity of at least 30% by weight, as measured by any of the following methods (1) or (2), over a pH range of 3 to 7.

(1) adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 40 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced;

(2) adding 1 gram of said ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 20 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced.

45. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in Claim 43 in which said metal compound contains ~~containing~~ hydroxyl and/or carbonate ions.

46. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 43 in which said compound has a hydrotalcite type structure.

47. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 44 in which said compound has a phosphate binding capacity of at least 30% by weight of the total weight of phosphate present as measured by method (1) or by method (2) over a pH range of 2 to 8.

48. (Currently amended) A method of manufacturing a phosphate-binding medicament suitable for oral administration, said method including the steps of:

producing a solution containing iron(III), at least one additional metal selected from the group comprising magnesium, calcium, lanthanum and cerium, and

carbonate and/or hydroxyl ions to produce a ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound which is free from aluminum and contains carbonate and/or hydroxyl ions, iron(III) and said at least one additional metals,

recovering the precipitate; and

processing the same to render the same suitable for use by oral administration.

49. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 48 in which said solution is maintained at a pH in the pH range from 10.0 to 10.5.

50. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 48 in which said solution is produced by combining a first solution containing iron (III) and said additional metal with a second solution containing hydroxyl and/or carbonate ions.

51. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 50 in which the rate of combining said first and second solutions is such that the mixed solution has a pH in the range from 10.0 to 10.5.

52. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 48 in which the additional metal to iron(III) ratio is in the range from 1:1 to 5:1.

53. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 48 in which the precipitate is processed without aging the same.

54. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 48 in which the precipitate is filtered and washed prior to processing for oral administration.

55. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in Claim 54 in which the precipitate as filtered and washed is unaged.

56. (Currently amended) Use, in the manufacture of a phosphate-binding medicament suitable for oral administration of, a ~~solid~~ mixed metal compound which

is free from aluminum and contains carbonate and/or hydroxyl ions, iron(III) and at least one additional metal selected from the group comprising magnesium, calcium, lanthanum and cerium.

57. (Previously presented) A method for treating hyperphosphataemia, in an animal in need
thereof, which comprises administering to said animal, a therapeutically effective amount of a metal sulphate material selected from the group comprising calcium, lanthanum and cerium sulphate, said metal sulphate material having been treated with an alkali solution.

58. (Previously presented) A metal sulphate material useful as a medicament, selected from the group comprising calcium, lanthanum and cerium sulphate, said metal sulphate material having been treated with an alkali solution and comprising a solid material.

59. (Previously presented) A material as claimed in Claim 58 in which the alkali is sodium hydroxide.

60. (Previously presented) A material as claimed in Claim 58 having a phosphate binding capacity of at least 30% by weight of the total weight of phosphate present as measured by any of the following methods (1) or (2), over a pH range of 3 to 7.

(1) adding 1 gram of said solid mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 40 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through 0.22 μm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced;

(2) adding 1 gram of said solid mixed metal compound to 25 ml of 20 mmol l^{-1} sodium phosphate buffer solution, homogenizing and gently agitating at room temperature for 30 minutes, centrifuging at 3000 rpm for 5 minutes, filtering through

0.22 µm millipore filter and measuring the soluble phosphate in the supernatant thus produced.

~~60~~61. (Currently amended) A material as claimed in Claim 58 having a phosphate binding capacity of at least 30% by weight of the total weight of phosphate present as measured by method (1) or by method (2) over a pH range of 2 to 8.

~~61~~62. (Currently amended) A method of preparing a metal sulphate material, which method comprises treating a solid material comprising at least one sulphate selected from the group comprising calcium, lanthanum and cerium sulphate with an alkali solution.

~~62~~63. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~Claim 61~~ claim 62 in which the metal sulphate is calcium sulphate.